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ABSTRACT

People today inhabit a male manufactured society in which males have historically made the rules by which individuals live. In the world of work, men's work is valued much more highly than is women's. The nurturing women do gets in the way of women doing things for themselves. A terrible myth has developed that women are masochistic by nature; that women enjoy suffering and pain. Too often when women go to therapists with a problem and are unhappy, they are told that they bring unhappiness to themselves. One main principle of feminist counseling is that the counselor's role is viewed more as that of a facilitator than an expert. In traditional male dominated counseling, the counselor or therapist is seen as the expert, the all-knowing father. A second principle of feminist counseling is that the counselor facilitates the client in reaching her goals; she helps women to effect behavioral, affectual, and attitudinal change. Feminist counselors should be women because of the phenomenon of female passivity in the presence of males. Feminist counselors must be aware of their own values and let them be known. Feminist counselors should be involved in social action and promoting change; they should be working toward optimal functioning in their own lives. In changing to a society of equality for all, all members of that society become more free to be real human beings. (ABL)

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FEMINIST COUNSELLING

Dorothy Hicks

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FIRST I WANT TO TELL YOU THAT I AM A NEWCOMER TO THIS TOPIC. ALTHOUGH I HAVE BEEN COUNSELLING FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, IT WAS ONLY IN THE SUMMER OF 1987 THAT I WAS INTRODUCED TO FEMINIST COUNSELLING. I BECAME REALLY EXCITED - IT HAD SO MUCH TO DO WITH ME AND WITH ALL THE WOMEN I KNOW.

I BEGAN READING AND ASKING QUESTIONS - DOING MORE READING - TALKING. THEN I WAS INVITED TO PRESENT A PAPER AT THE 1988 CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGES. I ACCEPTED WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT I AM A STUDENT WITH SO MUCH TO LEARN.

THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS IS A PRODUCT OF SOME OF THE RESEARCH, DISCUSSION, AND LECTURES I HAVE HAD OVER THE PAST YEAR.

INEQUALITIES OF WOMEN AND DEVALUING FEMALES HAVE ROOTS

THAT ARE VERY DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN THE TOTAL FABRIC OF SOCIETY. THESE ROOTS ARE SPREAD THROUGH OUR MAJOR SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN POSITIVE CHANGES DURING THE PAST TWO DECADES, THEY ARE MINISCULE WHEN WEIGHED AGAINST WHAT NEEDS TO BE CHANGED IN ORDER TO HAVE A SOCIETY OF EQUALITY.

I WILL NOW PRESENT YOU WITH SOME IF'S AND HOW COME'S TO GET YOUR THINKING FOCUSSED ON THE TOPIC.

IF WOMEN MAKE UP A LEAST 50 PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION, HOW COME 50 PERCENT OF OUR M.P.'S ARE NOT WOMEN?

HOW COME 50 PERCENT OF OUR SENATORS ARE NOT WOMEN?

SINCE 1921, WHEN AGNES MACPHAIL WAS FIRST ELECTED, ONLY 65 WOMEN HAVE BEEN ELECTED TO PARLIMENT.

IF WOMEN MAKE UP AT LEAST 50 PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION, HOW COME WOMEN ARE NOT IN 50 PERCENT OF THE PULPITS OF OUR CHURCHES, CATHEDRALS & SYNAGOGUES?

IF WOMEN MAKE UP AT LEAST 50 PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION, HOW COME 50 PERCENT OF OUR SUPREME COURT JUDGES ARE NOT WOMEN?

HOW COME 50 PERCENT OF OUR PROVINCIAL JUDGES ARE NOT WOMEN?

HOW COME 50 PERCENT OF OUR POLICE OFFICERS ARE NOT WOMEN?

IF WOMEN MAKE UP AT LEAST 50 PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION, HOW COME 50 PERCENT OF OUR UNIVERSITIES ARE NOT HEADED BY WOMEN? OF OUR APPROXIMATELY 159 COMMUNITY COLLEGES ACROSS THIS NATION, HOW MANY OF THE PRESIDENTS ARE WOMEN?

OF COURSE THERE ARE SOME AREAS WHERE THE STATISTICS FAVOR WOMEN -

MORE ONE PARENT FAMILIES ARE HEADED BY WOMEN THAN BY MEN.

MORE OLD WOMEN LIVE IN POVERTY THAN DO OLD MEN.

THE GREAT MAJORITY OF VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT ARE FEMALE.

WE LIVE IN A MALE MANUFACTURED SOCIETY - MALES HAVE HISTORICALLY MADE THE RULES AND LAWS THAT WE LIVE BY - UNDER - IN OUR CULTURE. WE HAVE BY "OSMOSIS" - EMBRACED THE PHILOSOPHY OF MALE SUPERIORITY - THE FATHER KNOWS BEST SYNDROME.

IN THE WORLD OF WORK, MEN'S WORK IS VALUED MUCH MORE HIGHLY THAN IS WOMEN'S WORK. FOR EVERY DOLLAR EARNED BY MEN, WOMEN EARN APPROXIMATELY 65 CENTS. THE RANGE IS FROM 35 CENTS IN SERVICE JOBS TO 67 CENTS IN CLERICAL JOBS (THE PAY GAP).

WE DESPERATELY NEED PAY EQUITY.

MAUREEN MCTEER, IN THE NOVEMBER 1987 ISSUE OF CHATELAINE, SAYS THAT THE PAY EQUITY LAWS PURPOSE IS TO ENSURE THAT WAGES ARE BASED ON THE VALUE TO THE EMPLOYER OF THE WORK AN EMPLOYEE PERFORMS, AND NOT ON THE EMPLOYEE'S GENDER. IT IS ONE OF THE IMPORTANT WAYS OF OPENING UP JOB GHETTOS. PAY EQUITY STILL HAS A LONG WAY TO GO BECAUSE THE LEGISLATION IS TOO EASY IN WHICH TO FIND LOOPHOLES (MCTEER, 1987).

MARY O'BRIEN, IN THE CANADIAN FORUM SAYS WOMEN HAVE "ALWAYS DONE THINGS - AGONIZINGLY AND TO THE POINT OF EXHAUSTION AND EVEN DEATH. WE HAVE WORKED, AND BORNE CHILDREN, AND THOUGHT AND ACTED AND WEPT AND ALUGHED AND LOVED AND HATED AND SUNG AND DANCED AND WORKED AND WORKED AND

WORKED. BUT THE THINGS WE HAVE DONE HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED INCONSEQUENTIAL; PARTICULAR AND PALTRY; NECESSARY BUT BORING, NOT MAKING HISTORY BUT MAKING MEN COMPFORTABLE" (O'BRIEN, 1986).

WOMEN ARE GREAT NURTURERS, WE'VE BEEN BORN INTO IT, RAISED IN IT - HELP MOMMY, MAKE DADDY COMFORTABLE, LOOK AFTER LITTLE BROTHER. OUR NURTURING GETS IN THE WAY OF OUR DOING THINGS FOR OURSELVES - FOR NURTURING SELF AND OTHER WOMEN. IF WE DO NURTURE SELF, WE FEEL GUILTY - SELFISH. WE MUST LEARN TO TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES BETTER, TO OFTEN PUT OUR OWN WELFARE FIRST. WE MUST PUT MORE VALUE ON OURSELVES AND SELF NURTURNING IS A GOOD STARTING PLACE.

I WILL NOW GIVE YOU SOME INFORMATION TO ILLISTRATE JUST HOW

PATERNALISTIC OUR SOCIETY IS.

OUR DOMINATION IS THROUGH OUR GENDER. IT IS NECESSARY FOR US TO LEARN HOW TO DEVELOP THEORIES OF HOW SEXUAL OPPRESSION IS PRODUCED THROUGH THE PRACTICES OF EVERYDAY LIFE, AS WELL AS THROUGH THE PROCESSES OF SOCIAL REGULATION AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION. GENDER IS A SOCIAL CATEGORY, NOT A BIOLOGIAL ONE, AND OUR PHYSIOLOGICAL CONSTITUTION - WHO WE ARE AS WOMEN - HAS BEEN DEFINED BY MEN IN POSITIONS OF SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL POWER. ALTHOUGH MEN AND WOMEN DO HAVE DIFFERENT WAYS OF EXPERIENCING LIFE, THERE ARE ALSO MANY DIFFERENCES THAT ARE PRODUCED THROUGH GENDERED PRACTICES WHICH SUBORDINATE WOMEN TO MEN (K. ROCKHILL, 1986).

THE ROOTS OF GENDERED PRACTICES GO WAY BACK IN HISTORY. I WILL TAKE A MOMENT TO LOOK AT ORGANIZED RELIGION. MALES ARE THE POWERHOUSE OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICES YET MORE WOMEN THAN MEN ATTEND CHURCH IN THIS COUNTRY. STATUES, PAINTINGS, IMAGES OF GOD PORTRAY GOD AS A MALE FIGURE. THE BIBLE TELLS US THAT GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS IMAGE. WOMAN WAS CREATED FROM MAN'S RIB TO BE HIS HELPMATE. IN THE WHOLE SECTION ON WHO BEGOT WHOM - IT IS ALWAYS THE MALE - FOR GENERATION AFTER GENERATION - WHO IS MENTIONED. LITTLE ATTENTION IS PAID TO THE BEGOTTEES - THE WOMEN WHO BORE ALL OF THESE MEN WHO ARE IDENTIFIED IN VERSE AFTER VERSE AFTER VERSE

IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR, SISTER THERESA KANE, SPEAKING IN ST. JOHN'S NEWFOUNDLAND, SAID THAT SO LONG AS GOD IS SEEN

AS EXCLUSIVELY MALE, WOMEN WILL NOT BE EQUAL IN THE CHURCH OR IN SOCIETY. SHE ONCE CHALLENGED THE POPE ON WOMEN'S ORDINATION, BUT SHE DOES NOT CONSIDER HERSELF A REBEL. HOWEVER, SHE DOES REBEL AGAINST THE IMAGES PORTRAYED. SHE SEES GOD AS NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE, BUT AS LONG AS OUR IMAGES OF GOD ARE MALE - AND IMAGES OF NUNS (SISTERS) AS PEOPLE WHO ARE DOCILE, QUIET, PASSIVE - THERE WILL NOT BE EQUALITY. SHE SAID THAT CATHOLICS NEED TO BE OBEDIENT TO THEIR LEADERS IN THE SENSE THAT OBEDIENCE MEANS LISTENING. NOT CONFORMING. WE CANNOT RESPOND IN BLIND CONFORMITY SO THAT THERE IS NO CRITICAL THINKING. WHEN THE VATICAN REJECTED WOMEN'S ORDINATION, IT WAS A PAINFUL MOMENT. HOWEVER, FEMINISTS IN THE CHURCH SAY - THE ANSWER IS NO FOR

NOW, BUT WE ARE TO CONTINUE WORKING ON IT (THE EVENING PATRIOT, 1988).

THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE WOMEN ARE PORTRAYED PRETTY NEGATIVELY RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING. WHO TEMPTED WHOM IN THE GARDEN? WOMAN IS SINFUL, LUSTFUL - SHE ASKED FOR PAIN AND SHE GOT IT. SHE WILL GIVE BIRTH IN AGONY - AND THIS LEADS ME INTO ANOTHER TERRIBLE MYTH - THE MYTH OF FEMALE MASOCHISM. WE'RE TOLD THAT WE'RE MASOCHISTIC BY NATURE. WE'RE SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BECAUSE OF OUR MASOCHISTIC TENDENCY, AND YOU KNOW THAT MASOCHISM MEANS: A NEED TO SUFFER, AND THE ENJOYMENT OF PAIN AND SUFFERING.

FREUD, THE FOUNDER AND FATHER OF PSYCHOANALYSIS POPULARIZED THE THEORY OF FEMALE MASOCHISM, AND MENTAL HEALTH

PROFESSIONALS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC HAVE COME TO BELIEVE IT.

TOO OFTEN WHEN WOMEN GO TO THERAPISTS WITH A PROBLEM AND ARE UNHAPPY, AND ARE TOLD SUCH THINGS AS: YOU BRING YOUR UNHAPPINESS ON YOURSELF. YOU MAKE YOUR OWN TROUBLES. YOU GET SOMETING OUT OF SUFFERING. WHEN THEY LEAVE THE THERAPY SESSION, THEY OFTEN COME OUT WITH TWO PROBLEMS. THE ONE THEY WENT IN WITH, AND A NEW ONE - THE BELIEF THAT THEY ARE SICK AND ARE TO BLAME FOR THEIR OWN SICKNESS. THE MYTH OF FEMALE MASOCHISM IS VERY DESTRUCTIVE. HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU HEARD? SHE BROUGHT IT ON HERSELF. SHE ASKED FOR IT. SHE MUST LIKE IT OR SHE WOULDN'T STAY. LOOK HOW SHE DRESSED TO TEMPT MEN. IT IS A PATERNALISTIC MYTH AND ITS GOT TO STOP. WE HAVE TO RECOGNIZE THAT NO ONE WANTS TO SUFFER. AS THERAPISTS AND

COUNSELLORS WE HAVE TO SAY THIS, AND SAY IT AGAIN AND AGAIN. WE HAVE TO STOP OTHER PEOPLE FROM SAYING IT TOO (CAPLAN, 1986).

THIS MYTH AND THE DEVALUING OF WOMEN AND THE SOCIALIZING PRACTICES IN OUR SOCIETY ARE THE REASONS FOR THE HIGH INSTANCES OF SEXUAL ASSAULT, RAPE AND WIFE BATTERING. IN CANADA, A WOMAN IS RAPED EVERY 17 MINUTES; 1 IN 5 WOMEN ARE BATTERED EVERY YEAR BY THEIR PARTNERS; ONE IN 4 GIRLS IS SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BY AGE 18. THESE ARE HORRENDOUS STATISTICS. THESE ARE GRAVE CRIMES THAT ARE NOT DEALT WITH GRAVELY AND FAIRLY IN OUR SYSTEM OF LAW AND JUSTICE.

RAPE IS NOT A SEXUAL MATTER. SEXUAL AND OTHER ASSAULTS AGAINST WOMEN ARE ROOTED IN MALE POWER AND CONTROL. IN OUR SOCIETY, MALES ARE SOCIALIZED AND CONDITIONED TO BE

AGGRESSIVE AND TO CONTROL. FEMALES ARE SOCIALIZED AND CONDITIONED TO BE PASSIVE AND UNDER CONTROL.

SEXUAL ASSAULT IS AN ASSAULT ON THE BODY BUT PERHAPS EVEN MORE DESTRUCTIVE, IT IS AN ASSAULT ON THE MIND. THERE ARE LONG TERM EFFECTS SUFFERED BY THE VICTIMS OF THESE CRIMES. IT IS THE ONLY TYPE OF CRIME IN WHICH THE VICTIM MAY FEEL, OR BE TREATED AS IF, SHE WERE THE ACCUSED - HER FAULT - SHE'S GUILTY.

ONLY A FRACTION OF SEXUAL ASSAULTS GET REPORTED; A SMALLER FRACTION GO TO COURT, AND AN EVEN TINIER FRACTION RESULT IN CONVICTION. THE SENTENCES FOR CONVICTION ARE VERY SHORT - MUCH SHORTER THAN FOR CRIMES SUCH AS BREAK AND ENTER. TWO EXAMPLES FROM P.E.I.

SEXUAL ASSAULT ON 5 GIRLS - 30 DAYS

SEXUAL ASSAULT ON 2 DAUGHTERS - IMPREGNATING ONE OF THEM - TWO YEARS LESS A DAY

A GREAT MANY CONVICTIONS RESULT IN SUSPENDED SENTENCES.

OUR LEGAL AND JUSTICE SYSTEM LEAVES MUCH TO BE DESIRED AS FAR AS WOMEN ARE CONCERNED. "OUR COURTS FAIL AS A SERVICE OF PROTECTION AND FAIL MISERABLY AS A SYSTEM OF JUSTICE". "OUR ADVERSARIAL SYSTEM WAS ESTABLISHED BY MEN FOR MEN" (BREHAUT, 1986).

ANOTHER SOCIAL INSTITUTION THAT IS MALE DOMINATED IS THAT OF ECONOMICS.

WOMEN IN GENERAL HAVE A POOR ECONOMIC STATUS. EVEN THOUGH MORE AND MORE WOMEN ARE ENTERING THE LABOUR FORCE,

MANY OF THE JOBS ARE LABOUR INTENSIVE, LOW PAYING, PART TIME, AND HAVE LITTLE IN THE WAY OF JOB SECURITY OR ADVANCEMENT. WOMEN EARN LESS THAN MEN, AND ARE GHETTORIZED INTO RELATIVELY FEW OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES. THERE ARE MORE WOMEN THAN MEN IN THE POVERTY STATISTICS. SIX OUT OF TEN SINGLE, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED WOMEN OVER 65 YEARS OF AGE LIVE IN POVERTY. OVER A THIRD OF WELFARE CASELOADS ARE MADE UP OF SINGLE MOTHERS.

TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC THEORY IS FILLED WITH BIASES - BIASES IN METHODOLOGY AND IN THE SELECTION OF TOPICS - BECAUSE OF THE GENDER BIAS OF OUR CULTURE. ECONOMIC THEORY MODELS ARE OFTEN SET UP AND DEFINED IN WAYS THAT RESULT IN REINFORCING, RATHER THAN ALLEVIATING, THE ECONOMIC INEQUALITY OF WOMEN (WHITE, 1984). WOMEN HAVE LITTLE CONTROL OVER THE

NATION'S WEALTH; OWN A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE REAL ESTATE, AND HAVE LITTLE CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL SERVICES.

WOMEN ARE ALMOST INVISIBLE IN ECONOMIC THEORY. THERE IS, FOR INSTANCE, VIRTUALLY NO ANALYSIS OF THE CONSEQUENCES TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN WHEN MARRIAGE BREAKS DOWN. FERTILITY AND LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION STUDIES FOCUS SOLELY ON MARRIED COUPLES. IT ASSUMES THAT FAMILY INCOME IS EQUALLY DISTRIBUTED. FACT: MORE MONEY IS SPENT ON BOYS THAN ON GIRLS. FACT: UNEMPLOYED WOMEN IN HIGHER INCOME FAMILIES HAVE THE LEAST ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER FAMILY INCOME (WHITE, 1984).

ECONOMIC THEORY OFTEN MAKES LIGHT OF FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT. OUR SOCIETY ONLY GETS SHAKEN UP WHEN MALE UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES ARE HIGH. MANY BATTERED WOMEN ARE

IMPRISONED IN THEIR BATTERING HOMES BECAUSE OF THEIR LACK OF ECONOMIC CHOICE (WHITE, 1984).

MASCULINE DOMINANCE IN SCIENCE AND LAW CONTROLS THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF REPRODUCTION - FROM INVITRO FERTILIZATION - TO ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION - TO SURROGATE MOTHERING - TO ABORTION. THIS HAS GRAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL POLICY AND ON THE EVERYDAY LIVES OF WOMEN (ROCKHILL, 1986). MEN OWN THE BEDROOMS, THE BOARDROOMS AND THE COURTROOMS. THIS SAME DOMINATION IS REFLECTED IN THE SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE OF MOTHER AS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN.

SOMER BRODRIBB (1984) SAYS THAT DURING THE 19TH CENTURY, CUSTODY OF CHILDREN CHANGED FROM FATHER RIGHT TO MOTHER OBLIGATION AS THE ECONOMIC ROLE OF CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY CHANGED

FROM A BENEFIT TO A COST. FOR ONE THING, THIS IS REFLECTED IN THE LACK OF AFFORDABLE, HIGH QUALITY DAY CARE THROUGHOUT OUR SOCIETY.

EDUCATION FOR COUNSELLORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND OTHER WELLNESS CARE PERSONNEL IS ALSO GENDER BIASED. THS IS AN AREA THAT HAS ATTRACTED MUCH EFFORT BY FEMINISTS. I CERTAINLY CAN'T COVER EVERY FIELD AND EVERY ASPECT, BUT I WILL TOUCH ON THE EDUCATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND DWELL ON THAT OF (COUNSELLORS, THERAPISTS, PSYCHOLOGISTS).

PATRICIA MCGILLICUDDY, (1984) DID A CRITICAL REVIEW OF FAMILY THERAPY COURSES IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION. SHE FOUND MANY BIASIS IN THE LITERATURE, TEXTS AND COURSE OUTLINES. (CANADIAN) SHE FOUND MISIDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEM FAMILIES;

SHE FOUND IGNORING OF CHANGES IN FAMILY STRUCTURE - SUCH THINGS AS LONGEVITY, MORE WORKING MOTHERS, FERTILITY; SHE FOUND THE IGNORING OF THE "UGLY" SIDE OF FAMILY LIFE - FAMILY VIOLENCE. AND SHE ALSO FOUND SEXIST BIAS IN ROLES; FUNCTIONS OF FAMILY MEMBERS; AND IN LANGUAGE. SHE SAYS SOME OF THE NECESSARY CHANGES IN EDUCATING SOCIAL WORKERS FOR THE MODERN WORLD MUST INCLUDE: AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE DIVERSITY OF FAMILY TYPES; THE MAJOR CHANGES IN FAMILIES IN THE RECENT PAST; AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS. SHE FURTHER STATES THAT EQUALLY AS PERVASIVE AS THE BIASES, IS THE TENDENCY FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL ASSUMPTIONS MADE IN RELATION TO FAMILY GROUPS IS THAT OF BASING IT ON A POPULATION OF MARRIED, MIDDLE TO UPPER CLASS

FAMILIES. AND WE ALL KNOW THAT A LARGE PECENTAGE OF THE CASE LOADS OF WORKERS IS NOT COMPOSED OF THESE TYPES OF FAMILIES.

AS I STATED EARLIER, FREUD IS THE FATHER OF PSYCHOANALSIS. ALL THERAPISTS, PSYCHOLOGISTS AND COUNSELLORS STUDY FREUD'S WORK AND THEORIES. IT IS PART OF THE BASIC COURSES OF STUDIES FOR ALL. AS WELL, THE PROFESSORS HAVE BEEN MALE AND THIS AREA CONTINUES TO BE MALE DOMINATED, ALTHOUGH IN RECENT YEARS THERE ARE MORE FEMALE PROFESSORS. I HAVE BEEN VERY LUCKY IN MY MOST RECENT DEGREE PROGRAM IN THAT THE MAJORITY OF MY PROFESSORS HAVE BEEN FEMALE, BUT MY MAJOR ADVISOR IS MALE.

THE MAJOR THEORIES AND THEORISTS THAT COUNSELLORS IN

TRAINING MUST STUDY ARE MALE. LET ME LIST SOME OF THE MAJOR AS ILLUSTRATION - UNDOUBTEDLY THESE NAMES WILL BE VERY FAMILIAR TO YOU.

ERIC ERICKSON AND HIS THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT

CARL JUNG AND HIS THEORY OF THE UNCONSCIOUS (COLLECTIVE)

ABRAM MASLOW - HIERARCHY OF HUMAN NEEDS, SELF - ACTUALIZING

WILLIAM GLASER - REALITY THERAPY

CARL ROGERS - CLIENT CENTERED THERAPY

FRITZ PERLS - GESTALT THERAPY

B.F. SKINNER - BEHAVIOURISTIC PSYCHOLOGY; BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION

THERE ARE FEW WOMEN WHO MAKE THE TEXT BOOKS, THOSE LIKE

KAREN HORNEY, WHO IS STUDIED UNDER THE NEO-FREUDIANS, USUALLY ARE GIVEN LITTLE TIME OR ATTENTION. BY THE WAY, KAREN HORNEY WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO WRITE ON THE MYTH OF FEMALE MASOCHISM. SHE WAS CRITICAL OF FREUD, AND HIS NEGATIVE STANCE ON FEMALES. RECENT RESEARCH STUDIES ON HELD ATTITUDES OF COUNSELLORS AND PROFESSIONAL CLINICIANS SHOW THAT THE STEREOTYPES AND SEX-TYPING OF FEMALES IS STILL ALIVE AND WELL. A RATING SCALE QUESTIONNAIRE THAT PROFILES THE "NORMAL HEALTHY ADULT" WAS ADMINISTERED TO BOTH MALE AND FEMALE PRACTIONERS. THE RESULTS SHOWED THE "NORMAL HEALTHY MALE" AND THE "NORMAL HEALTHY ADULT" AS HIGHLY SIMILAR. THE "NORMAL HEALTHY FEMALE" WAS SEEN LESS POSITIVELY, AND UNLIKE THE "NORMAL HEALTHY ADULT". THE QUESTIONNARIE USED DISCRIPTIVE TERMS OF CHARACTERISTICS.

"NEGATIVE" CHARACTERISTICS WERE EQUATED WITH FEMALE OR UNHEALTHY, WHILE POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS WERE EQUATED WITH MALE AND HEALTHY. THESE CHARACTERISTICS WERE SUCH AS: EMOTION, STRENGTH, ASSERTIVE, POWERFUL, WEAK,...

SO IF YOU'RE A NORMAL ADULT AND A HEALTHY ADULT YOU'RE MALE OR HAVE MALE CHARACTERISTICS!

STUDIES ALSO FOUND THAT COUNSELLORS WORKING WITH FEMALE CLIENTS ARE INFLUENCED BY OUTDATED, STEREOTYPED BELIEFS ABOUT FEMALE ROLES AND BEHAVIOURS, AS WELL AS HAVING UNCLEAR IDEAS ABOUT FEMALE CLIENT'S COGNITIONS AND FUTURE ASPIRATIONS (ROBINSON AND PAGE, 1988). AS WELL, RESEARCH FINDINGS SHOW THAT COUNSELLORS RETAIN OR RECALL THE COUNSELLING CONCERNS OF MALE CLIENTS FAR BETTER THAN THEY DO THOSE OF THEIR FEMALE

CLIENTS. ALSO, IN CLINICAL AND COUNSELLING SESSIONS, RESEARCH SHOWS THAT MALE CLIENTS ARE MORE CONCERNCED WITH THEMSELVES, WHILE FEMALE CLIENTS ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS AND WITH THE CONCERNS OF OTHER PEOPLE GENERALLY. (ROBINSON AND PAGE, 1988).

THE DIFFERENCE IN THE CONCERNS OF MALES AND FEMALES IS MAINLY DUE TO ACCULTURALIZATION. THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT SCALE WHICH WAS DEVELOPED BY LAWRENCE KOHLBERG IS WHAT SPURRED CAROL GILLIGAN TO DO RESEARCH, AND WRITE IT UP IN HER BOOK, IN A DIFFERENT VOICE. IN IT, SHE REALLY TAKES ISSUE WITH KOHLBERG'S THEORY AND THE RESEARCH UPON WHICH IT IS BASED.

KOHLERG'S RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED USING MALE SUBJECTS - MAINLY INNER CITY YOUTHS. GILLIGAN FOUND LOTS OF HOLES IN HIS

RESEARCH METHODS AND FINDINGS. BECAUSE MALES ARE SOCIALIZED TO THINK IN TERMS OF JUSTICE AND RULES, AND FEMALES ARE SOCIALIZED TO BE NURTURERS AND TO WORK OUT COMPROMISES RATHER THAN BE CONFRONTIVE, THE KOHLBERG SCALE IS A BIASED INSTRUMENT FOR FEMALES. ON THE SCALE WHICH CONSISTS OF 5 LEVELS, VERY, VERY FEW WOMEN GET BEYOND THE THIRD LEVEL ON THE SCALE. THEREFORE, THE CONCLUSIONS DRAWN ARE THAT WOMEN HAVE A LOWER OR WEAKER LEVEL OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT THAN DO MEN. GILLIGAN'S FINDINGS SHOW THAT BECAUSE FEMALES ARE SOCIALIZED DIFFERENTLY, THEIR MORAL DEVELOPMENT IS DIFFERENT FROM, NOT LESS THAN, OR WEAKER THAN, MALES.

GETTING BACK TO FREUD AND HIS MALE ORIENTED THEORY IN WHICH WOMEN ARE VERY MUCH SEEN AS INFERIOR, I WILL TALK ON HIS

"PENIS ENVY THEORY". A FEMINIST RESEARCHER DECIDED TO TEST THIS THEORY. SHE FOUND THAT AROUND THE AGE AT WHICH FREUD SAID THAT LITTLE GIRLS ALL HAVE PENIS ENVY, THAT IN FACT CHILDREN OF BOTH SEXES ARE VERY CONCERNED WTH ISSUES OF CONTROL, OF BEING ABLE TO PROTECT THEIR BODIES, AND OF HAVING A SENSE OF VULNERABILITY. THIS IS AROUND TOILET TRAINING TIME, SHE FOUND THAT THE CHILDREN WHEN ASKED WHAT THEY THOUGHT ABOUT PENISES, BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS WOULD SAY SUCH THINGS AS "YOU CAN'T CONTROL THEM VERY WELL" AND LITTLE GIRLS SAID SUCH THINGS AS I'M GLAD I DON'T HAVE ONE, THEY BUMP INTO THINGS". SHE SAID A STATEMENT LIKE THIS COULD BE LABELLED "PENIS PITY". IF WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT PENIS ENVY, WE HAD BETTER TALK ABOUT PENIS PITY TOO (CAPLAN, 1986).

WE ARE ALSO VERY FAMILIAR WITH THE TERMS HYSTERIA, AND HYSTERICAL WOMEN. THIS TOO WAS POPULARIZED BY FREUD. OUR WOMB IS THE BASIS FOR OUR EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS. SO ON THE ONE HAND WE'RE DAMMED BECAUSE OF SOMETHING WE HAVEN'T GOT - A PENIS, AND ON THE OTHER HAND FOR WHAT WE HAVE GOT - A UTERUS - A NO WIN SITUATION.

ANOTHER THEORIST THAT WE STUDY IS ERIC ERIKSON. HIS STAIRSTEP OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT - FROM THE FIRST STAGES OF

INFANCY OLD AGE

TRUST VS MISTRUST UP THROUGH GENERATIVITY VS DESPAIR. A FEMINIST RESEARCHER FOUND MUCH RESEARCH, INCLUDING ERIKSON'S, TO BE VERY SLOPPY. SHE CRITICIZES ERICKSON'S

THEORY OF INNER SPACE. ERIKSON SAID THAT HIS RESEARCH FINDINGS SHOWED THAT BECAUSE FEMALES HAVE A UTERUS, THEY PERCEIVE AND ORGANIZE SPACE DIFFERENTLY THAN DO MALES. HE SAID THAT IF YOU GIVE LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS BLOCKS, THE GIRLS WILL BUILD ENCLOSURES BECAUSE OF THEIR INNER SPACE, WHILE BOYS WILL BUILD TOWERS BECAUSE THEY HAVE A PENIS. IN HIS THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT, THE STAGE AT WHICH A SENSE OF IDENTITY IS REACHED (TEENS) THAT THE FEMALE CANNOT HAVE A REAL SENSE OF IDENTITY UNTIL SHE KNOWS WHO WILL FILL HER INNER SPACE! CAPLAN TRIED TO REPLICATE ERIKSON'S STUDY. SHE COULD NOT. IN FACT, WHAT SHE DID FIND WAS THAT MOST KIDS BUILD ENCLOSURES! (CAPLAN, 1986).

CAPLAN LOOKED AT A LOT OF DIFFERENT RESEARCH, AND SHE

FOUND MUCH OF IT TO BE SLOPPY. SHE SAYS "I WAS APPALLED BY WHAT PEOPLE DID WITH THIS SLOPPY RESEARCH, THE RESULTS OF WHICH WERE MISINTERPRETED AND USED TO OPPRESS WOMEN. RESEARCH THAT WAS INTERPRETED AS SUGGESTING THAT WOMEN HAD CERTAIN FAILINGS INTELLECTUALLY WAS USED TO JUSTIFY KEEPING WOMEN OUT OF CERTAIN COURSES, CERTAIN JOBS, CERTAIN KINDS OF ENDEAVOURS" (CAPLAN, 1986).

FEMINIST COUNSELLING (FEMINIST THERAPY) HAS ITS ROOTS IN THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT OF THE 60'S. IT IS AN EMERGING - DEVELOPING THEORY WHICH ALIGNS ITSELF MOST CLOSELY TO THE HUMANISTIC THEORIES THAN TO THE OTHER BRANCHES. I AM INDEBTED TO SUSAN STURDIVANT (AUTHOR) AND DIANA HULSE-KILLACKY (PROFESSOR) FOR THE FOLLOWING ELABORATION ON FEMINIST

COUNSELLING.

FEMINIST COUNSELLORS REDEFINE THE WORLD AND SOCIAL ISSUES FOR THEMSELVES AND FOR THEIR CLIENTS. THEY WORK TOWARD BRINGING INTO THE OPEN, THE DEVALUING OF WOMEN IN OUR SOCIETY - THE DEVALUING OF WOMEN'S WORK AND WOMEN'S ABILITIES. THEY WORK TOWARD CHANGING SOCIETY SO THAT THESE ARE VALUED RATHER THAN DEVALUED. THEY WORK TOWARD LIBERATING BOTH MEN'S AND WOMEN'S BELIEFS FROM THE VICIOUS STEREOTYPES, AND WORK TOWARD FREEING WOMEN TO TRUST THEMSELVES. FEMINIST COUNSELLING FOSTERS WOMEN WORKING TOGETHER TO BRING ABOUT SOCIAL CHANGE AND TOWARD BRINGING WOMEN'S CONCERNS TO THE POLITICAL FOREFRONT.

LOW SELF-ESTEEM IS PERHAPS THE BIGGEST PROBLEM OF WOMEN -

OR PERHAPS I SHOULD SAY, THE ROOT OF WOMEN'S PROBLEMS. IT COMES FROM DEVALUING WOMEN, AND IT LEADS TO LOW SELF-CONFIDENCE - OF BEING OVERWORKED AND UNDERPAID - OF BEING ON THE RECEIVING END OF INJUSTICE AND ABUSE. ONE OF THE PRIMARY TASKS OF FEMINIST COUNSELLORS IS TO AID WOMEN IN GAINING HIGH SELF-ESTEEM - ON PLACING A HIGH VALUE ON HERSELF - AND ON OTHER WOMEN.

FEMINIST COUNSELLING VIEWS WOMEN AS BEING EQUAL TO MEN. IT SEES WOMEN AS HAVING GREAT POTENCY BASED ON THEIR UNRECOGNIZED STRENGTHS, ON THEIR ENDURANCE, AND ON THEIR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE INTERPERSONAL RISKS IN BECOMING EMOTIONALLY INVOLVED WITH OTHERS.

FEMINIST COUNSELLING REJECTS THE MYTH OF FEMALE

INFERIORITY. IT PLACES HIGH AND POSITIVE VALUE ON MANY OF THE TRADITIONAL FEMALE TRAITS THAT HAVE BEEN NEGATIVELY COMPARED WITH TRADITIONAL MALE TRAITS WHICH HAVE HIGH VALUE. THESE FEMALE TRAITS SUCH AS COOPERATION ARE SEEN AS A STRENGTH RATHER THAN AS A WEAKNESS. TRAITS SUCH AS NURTURANCE, WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE, AND INTERPERSONAL SENSITIVITY ARE VIEWED AS VALUABLE HUMAN TRAITS. IT PLACES VALUE ON BOTH INTUITIVE AND NONRATIONAL MODES OF BEING. IT VIEWS FEMALE SEXUALITY AS AN INTEGRAL AND POSITIVE PART OF FEMALE NATURE, AND SEES IT AS A RICH SOURCE OF FEMALE POWER AND STRENGTH.

IT CREATES AN IMAGE OF WOMEN AS FREE AND INDEPENDENT, AS WHOLE HUMAN BEINGS, COMPLETE IN AND OF THEMSELVES, AND BEINGS WHO ARE CAPABLE OF SELF-DEFINITION. WOMEN MUST BEGIN TO CREATE

THEMSELVES AS SUBJECTS RATHER THAN OBJECTS. THEY MUST BECOME ACTIVE CREATORS OF THEIR OWN LIVES RATHER THAN BE REACTIVE TO EVENTS AROUND THEM, OR SPECTATORS TO THE ADVENTURES OF MEN. SUBJECTS DEFINE THEMSELVES THROUGH THEIR OWN ACTIVITIES, WHILE OBJECTS ARE DEFINED; SUBJECTS MODIFY WHILE OBJECTS ARE MODIFIED. WOMEN THEMSELVES, AND SOCIETY TOO, MUST STOP IDENTIFYING OR DEFINING WOMEN IN TERMS SUCH AS: SOME MALE'S MOTHER, SOME MALE'S WIFE, SOME MALE'S DAUGHTER.

THE TWO MAIN PRINCIPLES OF FEMINIST COUNSELLING ARE:

1. "THE COUNSELLORS ROLE IS VIEWED MORE IN TERMS OF A FACILITATOR RATHER THAN AS AN EXPERT." IN TRADITIONAL COUNSELLING (MALE DOMINATED), THE COUNSELLOR OR THERAPIST

IS SEEN AS THE EXPERT, THE ALL KNOWING FATHER...

2. THE COUNSELLOR FACILITATES THE CLIENT IN REACHING HER GOALS - SHE HELPS WOMEN TO EFFECT BEHAVIOURAL, AFFECTUAL AND ATTITUDINAL CHANGE.

THE CRITERIA FOR FEMINIST COUNSELLORS INCLUDE:

1. THE COUNSELLOR MUST BE A WOMAN BECAUSE OF THE PHENOMENON OF FEMALE PASSIVITY IN THE PRESENCE OF MALES. THEREFORE, A FEMALE WILL DO MORE TO FACILITATE THE CLIENTS GROWTH FOR A WOMAN COUNSELLOR DOES NOT PERPETUATE THE USUAL POWER HIERARCHY OF MALE "EXPERT" AND FEMALE "PATIENT".

2. SHE MUST BE AWARE OF HER OWN VALUES AND BE WILLING TO LET THESE VALUES BE KNOWN.

WOMEN COUNSELLORS SERVE AS ROLE MODELS FOR THE CLIENTS

THE FEMINIST COUNSELLOR VIEWS HER CLIENTS AS BASICALLY COMPETENT PEOPLE, AND ASSUMES THAT THE CLIENT IS THE BEST EXPERT ON HERSELF.

3. SHE SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN SOCIAL ACTION AND PROMOTING CHANGE.

WOMEN HAVE A GREATER ABILITY TO EMPATHIZE WITH WOMEN BECAUSE OF THE SHARED EXPERIENCE OF BEING A WOMEN IN SOCIETY.

TEACHING IS A MAJOR PART OF THE COUNSELLING PROCESS - TEACHING ABOUT SEX ROLES AND THE ANALYSIS OF POWER

WOMEN ARE REINFORCED TO ACTIVELY SEEK SOLUTIONS FOR

CHANGING THE SYSTEM THAT OPPRESSES THEM INSTEAD OF TAKING ON THE VICTIM ROLE.

WOMEN ARE ENCOURAGED TO FOCUS ON THEIR STRENGTHS - THEY HAVE FOCUSSED ON THEIR INADEQUACIES FOR SO LONG THAT THEY FORGET ABOUT THEIR STRENGTHS.

4. SHE SHOULD BE WORKING TOWARD OPTIMAL FUNCTIONING IN HER OWN LIFE.

WOMEN HAVE A GREATER SENSITIVITY TO WOMEN'S ISSUES BECAUSE THE ISSUES ARE MORE PERSONALLY RELEVANT FOR HER.

WOMEN ARE ENCOURAGED TO PRACTICE NEW SKILLS - SKILLS SUCH AS ASSERTIVENESS, SELF-CONFIDENCE, SELF-RELIANCE, EXPRESSION OF ANGER, CONFRONTATION - IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT, AND WOMEN ARE ENCOURAGED TO NURTURE OTHER WOMEN

(STURDIVANT, 1980) (HULSE-KILLACKY, 1987).

I BELIEVE THAT THE PRACTISE OF FEMINIST COUNSELLING WILL BE GOOD FOR ALL OF US - MALE AND FEMALE. THROUGH CHANGING OUR SOCIETY TO ONE OF EQUALITY FOR ALL, WE ALL BENIFIT, WE ALL BECOME MORE FREE TO BE REAL HUMAN BEINGS. IT'S A WIN - WIN SITUATION.

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